



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

14 CFR Part 71

[Docket No. FAA-2022-1445; Airspace Docket No. 21-AWP-55]

RIN 2120-AA66

Proposed Modification of Class E Airspace; Visalia Municipal Airport, Visalia, CA

AGENCY: Federal Aviation Administration (FAA), Department of Transportation (DOT).

ACTION: Notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM).

SUMMARY: This action proposes to modify the Class E airspace designated as a surface area and modify the Class E airspace extending upward from 700 feet above the surface at Visalia Municipal Airport, Visalia, CA. This proposal would add and remove extensions of the Class E airspace extending from 700 feet above the surface at the airport. Additionally, this action proposes several administrative amendments to update the airport's existing Class E airspace legal descriptions. These actions will support the safety and management of instrument flight rules (IFR) operations at the airport.

DATES: Comments must be received on or before **[INSERT DATE 45 DAYS AFTER DATE OF PUBLICATION IN THE FEDERAL REGISTER]**.

ADDRESSES: Send comments on this proposal to the U.S. DOT, Docket Operations, 1200 New Jersey Avenue SE, West Building Ground Floor, Room W12-140, Washington, DC 20590; telephone: (800) 647-5527, or (202) 366-9826. You must identify "FAA Docket No. FAA-2022-1445; Airspace Docket No. 21-AWP-55," at the beginning of your comments. You may also submit comments through the internet at www.regulations.gov.

FAA Order JO 7400.11G, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, and subsequent amendments can be viewed online at www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications. For further information, you can contact the Airspace Policy Group, Federal Aviation Administration, 800 Independence Avenue SW, Washington, DC 20591; telephone: (202) 267-8783.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Raphell P. Taylor, Federal Aviation Administration, Western Service Center, Operations Support Group, 2200 S. 216th Street, Des Moines, WA 98198; telephone (405) 666-1176.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:

Authority for this Rulemaking

The FAA's authority to issue rules regarding aviation safety is found in Title 49 of the United States Code Subtitle I, Section 106 describes the authority of the FAA Administrator. Subtitle VII, Aviation Programs, describes in more detail the scope of the agency's authority. This rulemaking is promulgated under the authority described in Subtitle VII, Part A, Subpart I, Section 40103. Under that section, the FAA is charged with prescribing regulations to assign the use of airspace necessary to ensure the safety of aircraft and the efficient use of airspace. This regulation is within the scope of that authority, as it would modify Class E airspace at Visalia Municipal Airport, Visalia, CA, to support IFR operations at the airport.

Comments Invited

Interested parties are invited to participate in this proposed rulemaking by submitting such written data, views, or arguments, as they may desire. Comments that provide the factual basis supporting the views and suggestions presented are particularly helpful in developing reasoned regulatory decisions on the proposal. Comments are specifically invited on the overall regulatory, aeronautical, economic, environmental, and energy-related aspects of the proposal. Communications should identify both docket

numbers and be submitted in triplicate to the address listed above. Persons wishing the FAA to acknowledge receipt of their comments on this notice must submit with those comments a self-addressed, stamped postcard on which the following statement is made: “Comments to Docket No. FAA-2022-1445; Airspace Docket No. 21-AWP-55.” The postcard will be date/time stamped and returned to the commenter.

All communications received before the specified closing date for comments will be considered before taking action on the proposed rule. The proposal contained in this notice may be changed in light of the comments received. A report summarizing each substantive public contact with FAA personnel concerned with this rulemaking will be filed in the docket.

Availability of NPRMs

An electronic copy of this document may be downloaded through the internet at www.regulations.gov. Recently published rulemaking documents can also be accessed through the FAA’s web page at www.faa.gov/air_traffic/publications/airspace_amendments.

You may review the public docket containing the proposal, any comments received, and any final disposition in person in the Dockets Office (see the “ADDRESSES” section for the address and phone number) between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except federal holidays. An informal docket may also be examined during normal business hours at the Northwest Mountain Regional Office of the Federal Aviation Administration, Air Traffic Organization, Western Service Center, Operations Support Group, 2200 S. 216th Street, Des Moines, WA 98198.

Availability and Summary of Documents for Incorporation by Reference

This document proposes to amend FAA Order JO 7400.11G, dated August 19, 2022, and effective September 15, 2022. FAA Order JO 7400.11G is publicly available

as listed in the ADDRESSES section of this document. FAA Order JO 7400.11G lists Class A, B, C, D, and E airspace areas, air traffic service routes, and reporting points.

The Proposal

The FAA is proposing an amendment to 14 CFR part 71 by modifying the Class E airspace designated as a surface area and modifying the Class E airspace extending upward from 700 feet above the surface at Visalia Municipal Airport, CA.

The Class E airspace designated as a surface area should be expanded from 3.5 nautical miles (NM) to 4 (NM), to properly contain aircraft conducting circling maneuvers. Additionally, the Class E2 extension northwest of the airport is not required and should be removed.

The Class E airspace encircling the airport within a 5-mile radius is excessive and should be reduced. Class E airspace beginning at 700 feet above the surface is designed to contain departing IFR operations until they reach 1,200 feet above the surface, and a 4.5-mile radius encircling the airport is more appropriate. The two existing Class E5 extensions are currently described in relation to the now decommissioned Visalia very high frequency omnidirectional range (VOR) and require modifications. The first extension is within 2.1 miles each side of the 138° bearing from the airport extending from the 4.5-mile radius to 6.6 miles southeast of the airport. The second extension is within 1.8 miles each side of the 314° bearing, from the 4.5-mile radius to 6.6 miles northwest of the airport.

Finally, this action proposes administrative modifications to the airport's legal descriptions. The current Class E5 airspace description includes airspace for Mefford Field Airport, Tulare, CA. The FAA is establishing independent airspace for Mefford Field Airport and the additional airspace should be removed from Visalia Municipal Airport's airspace description. The Visalia VOR/distance measuring equipment (DME) navigational aid should be removed from the Class E2 text header and airspace

description. It was decommissioned on March 25th, 2022 and is not needed to describe airspace. The Class E2 legal description should also be updated to replace the outdated use of the phrases “Notice to Airmen” and “Airport/Facility Directory.” These phrases should be amended to read “Notice to Air Missions” and “Chart Supplement,” respectively, to match the FAA’s current nomenclature. Finally, Swanson Ranch NR1 Airport should be removed from the Class E5 text header and airspace description, as the airport no longer exists.

Class E2 and E5 airspace designations are published in paragraphs 6002 and 6005, respectively, of FAA Order 7400.11G, dated August 19, 2022, and effective September 15, 2022, which is incorporated by reference in 14 CFR 71.1. The Class E airspace designations listed in this document will be published subsequently in FAA Order JO 7400.11, which is published annually and becomes effective on September 15.

Regulatory Notices and Analyses

The FAA has determined that this regulation only involves an established body of technical regulations for which frequent and routine amendments are necessary to keep them operationally current, is non-controversial, and unlikely to result in adverse or negative comments. It therefore: (1) is not a “significant regulatory action” under Executive Order 12866; (2) is not a “significant rule” under DOT regulatory policies and procedures (44 FR 11034; February 26, 1979); and (3) does not warrant preparation of a regulatory evaluation as the anticipated impact is so minimal. Since this is a routine matter that will only affect air traffic procedures and air navigation, it is certified that this rule—when promulgated—would not have a significant economic impact on a substantial number of small entities under the criteria of the Regulatory Flexibility Act.

Environmental Review

This proposal will be subject to an environmental analysis in accordance with FAA Order 1050.1F, Environmental Impacts: Policies and Procedures, prior to any FAA final regulatory action.

List of Subjects in 14 CFR Part 71

Airspace, Incorporation by reference, Navigation (air).

The Proposed Amendment

Accordingly, pursuant to the authority delegated to me, the Federal Aviation Administration proposes to amend 14 CFR part 71 as follows:

PART 71 - DESIGNATION OF CLASS A, B, C, D, AND E AIRSPACE AREAS; AIR TRAFFIC SERVICE ROUTES; AND REPORTING POINTS

1. The authority citation for 14 CFR part 71 continues to read as follows:

Authority: 49 U.S.C. 106(f), 106(g), 40103, 40113, 40120; E.O. 10854, 24 FR 9565, 3 CFR, 1959-1963 Comp., p. 389.

§ 71.1 [Amended]

2. The incorporation by reference in 14 CFR 71.1 of FAA Order JO 7400.11G, Airspace Designations and Reporting Points, dated August 19, 2022, and effective September 15, 2022, is amended as follows:

Paragraph 6002. Class E Airspace Areas Designated as a Surface Area.

* * * * *

AWP CA E2 Visalia, CA [Amended]

Visalia Municipal Airport, CA
(lat. 36°19'07"N., long. 119°23'34"W.)

That airspace extending upward from the surface within a 4-mile radius of the airport. This Class E airspace area is effective during the specific dates and times established in advance by a Notice to Air Missions. The effective date and time will thereafter be continuously published in the Chart Supplement.

Paragraph 6005. Class E Airspace Areas Extending Upward from 700 feet or More Above the Surface of the Earth.

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AWP CA E5 Visalia, CA [Amended]

Visalia Municipal Airport, CA

(lat. 36°19'07"N., long. 119°23'34"W.)

That airspace extending upward from 700 feet above the surface within a 4.5-mile radius of the airport, and within 2.1 miles each side of the 138° bearing from the airport extending from the 4.5-mile radius to 6.6 miles southeast of the airport, and within 1.8 miles each side of the 314° bearing from the 4.5-mile radius to 6.6 miles northwest of the airport.

Issued in Des Moines, Washington, on December 7, 2022.

B. G. Chew
Group Manager
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Western Service Center

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